AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of communicating a fax message via a computer network, the method comprising:

receiving the fax via a public switched telephone network from a source location;

determining whether the source location authorizes incurring long-distance charges;

~~receiving~~ transmitting the fax message via the Internet ~~by~~ from a first server having at least one dial-up modem to a second server having at least one dial-up modem;

determining availability of the dial-up modem at the second server; and

sending the fax message via the dial-up modem and a public switched telephone network to a receiver.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising storing the fax message at the server.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising reserving an available dial-up modem for transmitting the fax message to the receiver.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein determining availability of the dial-up modem comprises identifying the active or inactive state of the dial-up modem.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein determining availability of the dial-up modem is performed periodically at predetermined times, or at start-up of the server, or after the modem is removed or another modem is added.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, further comprising saving the active or inactive state of the dial-up modem in a memory.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising queuing the fax message for sending at a later time if there is no dial-up modem available for immediate sending.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein queuing the fax message includes waiting for a period of time that is based upon at least one characteristic of the load upon the dial-up modem.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising sending a transmittal report to a transceiver having originated the fax message.

10. (Cancelled).

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein receiving the fax message includes handling the fax message according to the T.37 standard.

12. (Cancelled).

13. (Currently Amended) A system for communicating a fax message via a computer network, the system comprising:

means for receiving the fax via a public switched telephone network from a source location;

means for determining whether the source location authorizes incurring long-distance charges;

means for ~~receiving~~ transmitting via the Internet the fax message~~, wherein the receiving means is in communication with at least one dial-up modem~~;

means for determining availability of ~~the~~ a dial-up modem; and

means for sending the fax message via the dial-up modem and a public switched telephone network to a receiver.

14. (Original) The system of Claim 13, further comprising means for storing the fax message at the receiving means.

15. (Original) The system of Claim 13, further comprising means for reserving an available dial-up modem for transmitting the fax message to the receiver.

16. (Original) The system of Claim 13, further comprising means for queuing the fax message for sending at a later time if there is no dial-up modem available for immediate sending.

17. (Currently Amended) A program storage device storing instructions that when executed by a computer performs the method comprising:

receiving the fax via a public switched telephone network from a source location;

determining whether the source location authorizes incurring long-distance charges;

transmitting the ~~receiving the~~ fax message via the Internet to a receiver ~~by a server having at least one dial-up modem~~;

~~determining availability of the dial-up modem; and~~

~~sending the fax message via the dial-up modem and a public switched telephone network to a receiver~~.

18. (Cancelled).

19. (Cancelled).

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Currently Amended) A method of communicating a fax message via a computer network, the method comprising:

transmitting a fax from a first fax transceiver to a first server via a public switched telephone network;

determining whether a user of the first fax transceiver authorizes incurring long-distance charges;

forwarding of the fax by the first server, via a computer network, to a second server having a plurality of dial-up modems;

receiving and storing the fax at the second server;

determining availability of each of the dial-up modems;

queuing transmission of the fax for a period of time, and determining availability of each of the dial-up modems upon expiration of the time period, if none of the dial-up modems is available; and

sending the fax via a selected one of the dial-up modems and the publicly switched telephone network, determined to be available, to a second fax transceiver, wherein the second fax transceiver is physically located in the same local-toll area, of a public telephone network, as the second server.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 21, wherein receiving and storing includes processing the fax message according to the store-and-forward protocol.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 21, further comprising the act of reserving an available dial-up modem for sending the fax.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 21, wherein queuing transmission of the fax includes waiting for a period of time that is based upon at least one characteristic of the load upon the dial-up modem.

25. (Currently Amended) A program storage device storing instructions that when executed by a computer performs the method of communicating a fax message via a computer network, the method comprising:

transmitting a fax from a first fax transceiver to a first server via a public switched telephone network;

determining whether a user of the first fax transceiver authorizes incurring long-distance charges;

forwarding of the fax by the first server, via a computer network, to a second server having a plurality of dial-up modems;

receiving and storing the fax at the second server;

determining availability of each of the dial-up modems;

queuing transmission of the fax for a period of time, and determining availability of each of the dial-up modems upon expiration of the time period, if none of the dial-up modems is available; and

sending the fax via a selected one of the dial-up modems and the public switched telephone network, determined to be available, to a second fax transceiver, wherein the second fax transceiver is physically located in the same local-toll area, of a public telephone network, as the second server.

26. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein receiving and storing the fax message includes processing the fax message according to the store-and-forward protocol.

27. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein the method further comprises the act of reserving an available dial-up modem for sending the fax.

28. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 25, wherein queuing the fax comprises waiting for a predetermined period of time that is based upon at least one characteristic of the load upon the dial-up modem.

29. (Currently Amended) A system for communicating a fax message via a computer network, the system comprising:

a server that is configured to receive the fax message, wherein the server is in communication with the computer network, the server being configured to determine whether a transmitter of the fax message authorizes incurring long distance charges;

at least one dial-up modem, in communication with the server, configured to send the fax message to a receiver; and

a communication link for delivery of the fax message to the receiver, wherein the communication link comprises a public switched telephone network.

30. (Original) The system of Claim 29, wherein the server executes a fax handling process, comprising:

receiving the fax message by the server;

storing the fax message in a memory;

determining the availability of the at least one dial-up modem; and

sending the fax message via the dial-up modem to a receiver.

31. (Original) The system of Claim 29, wherein the communication link comprises a public switched telephone network, a conventional telephone link, a fiber optic link, or a wireless link.

32. (Original) The system of Claim 29, wherein the receiver is physically located in the local-toll area of the server.

33. (Original) The system of Claim 29, wherein the computer network is the Internet.

34. (Currently Amended) A system for communicating a store-and-forward fax message via a computer network, the system comprising:

a server that is configured to receive the fax message, wherein the server is in communication with the computer network, the server being configured to determine whether a transmitter of the fax message authorizes incurring long distance charges;

a plurality of dial-up modems, in communication with the server, configured to send the fax message to a receiver;

a module executing in the server for processing the fax, wherein processing the fax comprises:

storing the fax in a memory;

determining the availability of the each dial-up modem in the plurality dial-up modems;

queuing the fax for later delivery if none of the dial-up modems is available; and

sending the fax message via one of the dial-up modems to a receiver via a public switched telephone network.

35. (Original) The system of Claim 34, wherein the receiver is physically located in the local-toll area of the server.

36. (Original) The system of Claim 34, wherein the communication link comprises a public switched telephone network, a conventional telephone link, a fiber optic link, or a wireless link.

37. (Original) The system of Claim 34, wherein the computer network is the Internet.

38. (Cancelled).

39. (Cancelled).

40. (Cancelled).

41. (Cancelled).